

U.S. Department of Labor

Assistant Secretary for
Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210



JUL -7 2005

The Honorable Brad Henry
Governor of Oklahoma
State Capitol Building
Suite 212
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

Dear Governor Henry:

It is with pleasure that I respond to the State of Oklahoma's request for waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). This action is taken under the Secretary's authority to waive certain requirements of WIA Title I, subtitles B and E and Sections 8-10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act. In the Strategic State Plan for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act for the two-year period, July 1, 2005, through June 30, 2007, the state submitted two waiver requests, and a request for work-flex designation. The requests are written in the format identified in WIA Section 189(i)(4)(B) and 20 CFR 661.420(c), and appear to meet the standard for approval at 20 CFR 661.420(e) and 661.430. The following is the disposition of the state's waiver submission (copy enclosed).

Requested Waiver 1: Waiver to use Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for youth participants.

The state indicates that the waiver would offer flexibility in using youth funds to provide training services to youth while retaining limited adult funds to be used on adult training services. The request further states that the waiver will allow local areas to enhance delivery of occupational skills training and increase customer choice for youth. Accordingly, the state is granted a waiver of the prohibition on the use of ITAs for older and out-of-school youth at 20 CFR 664.510, through June 30, 2007. The state should ensure that funds used for ITAs are tracked and reflected in the individual service strategies for these youth.

Requested Waiver 2: Waiver of the required 50 percent employer match for customized training at WIA Section 101(8)(C) to permit a match based on a sliding scale.

The state indicates that a waiver permitting a sliding scale will improve services to customers seeking training, and will improve the capacity of local boards to market demand-driven services and build beneficial relations with the private sector. Accordingly, the state is granted a waiver to permit the use of a sliding scale.

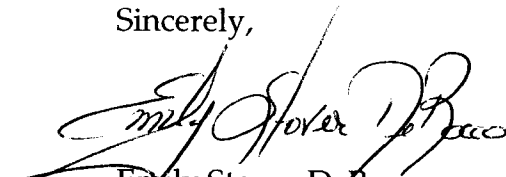
Requested work-flex designation: Approve designation as a work-flex state.

Per the requirement, at 20 CFR 661.430(c), to identify the statutory and regulatory requirements that are likely to be waived by the state for local areas, the state indicates that it is seeking to waive the requirement for a 50 percent employer match for customized training at WIA Section 101(8)(C), to permit a match based on a sliding scale. The state indicates that this will give the local areas more flexibility and speed up the waiver process, resulting in faster and better service delivery for job seekers and business. Accordingly, we are approving designation of the state as a work-flex state. As a condition of the designation, the state will submit to the Regional Office a list of other provisions that it anticipates waiving for local areas. We are excited about the state's decision to pursue this level of flexibility.

As provided for under paragraph 3 of the executed Agreement, the approved waivers are incorporated by reference into the state's WIA Grant Agreement. A copy of this letter should be filed with the state's WIA Grant Agreement and the state's Strategic Plan, as appropriate.

We look forward to continuing our partnership with you and achieving better workforce investment outcomes. We are prepared to entertain other state and local level waiver requests that you may wish to submit, consistent with the provisions of the WIA statute and regulations.

Sincerely,



Emily Stover DeRocco

Enclosure